

Scribing Demo (Robert Beach IPMS #9460)

NOTES:

Video - Paul Budzik (<https://www.paulbudzik.com>) has a good intro to scribing techniques, among many other topics.

Why? Scratchbuilding, repairs, accurizing, using good kits that have raised panel detailing

How? Courage and creativity and practice with your tools:

Tools

- Needle/scriber points
- Engravers (Tamiya/UMM-USA)
- Micro chisels
- Scrapers
- Sanding/smoothing (sanding sticks/scuff pads/needle files. wet-n-dry sandpaper)
- Templates, eraser shields / soft copper sheet, straight edges, tape
- Clothes pins, small clips for clamping
- Lighting/magnification
- Micro saws
- Drills
- Pencil/ruler (machinist best) /compass for measuring
- Plans that show details

Technique - Take your time!

- Bracing (table top/fingers/clamping templates & straight edges)
- Pressure (plastic 'grain'/progressive)- Use gentle, controlled strokes, block endpoints with fingers to prevent over runs
- Practice on internal surface of parts to get the feel for the plastic. Try out both types of scribers
- Start shallow then deepen to desired depth/width with repeated strokes. Don't do all at once!
- Start easy, start at ends, end in the middle if possible. Avoid starting in 'middle space' if possible.
- Pointed scribe then use engraver if needed, sand/file raised plastic edges as needed to smooth
- Clean out dust using pointed scribe or sharp, short needle (slightly blunted and smoothed)
- Also, can use soft paint brush to clean out grooves
- Final 'clean up' with light coat of thin cement (dissolves the dust)
- Pointed scribe used for shape templates.
- Fillers & glued joints: CA scribes cleanly, surface putties can 'flake', test first. Joints can be soft, take care to prevent gouging.
- Repairs (CA filler/applicator/file/sand)-Use point applicator for CA, apply just enough to fill defect, allow to harden without accelerator, then file, then use fine sanding stick to smooth.
- Straight edges (tape/metal) Templates: CLAMP it/ TAPE it, make sure it will not move. Do Not use too much pressure.
- Handmade templates (clear plastic best, brass sheet for small shapes, copper or aluminum (drink can) sheet for flexible 'profile' straight edges or shapes like access panels)
- Freehand? Can follow existing raised panel lines but takes practice & the engraved line is slightly offset - pay attention to which side you're following.

Resources

Internet: Videos (You-Tube), sourcing tools

Tool Sources:

UMM-USA - <https://umm-usa.com/>

Scribers, chisels, templates and rivet systems

MicroMark - <https://micromark.com/>

loads of tools, templates and other guides

Tamiya - <https://www.tamiya.com/english/tools/index.html>

Selection of drills, punches, engravers, templates. Good quality,if pricey, selection. Especially the tool handle that takes different size scribe 'bits'.

Online Suppliers:

Sprue Brothers - <https://spruebrothers.com/tools-supplies/>

Squadron Shop - <https://squadron.com/tools/>

Amazon - <https://www.amazon.com> (search for :Scribe Marking Tools)

Hobby shops

Practice! Practice helps develop the 'feel' for using the technique.Dive in and have fun!

Presentation:

Discuss engraving rationale

Point to examples (Monogram F-16 & F-14, MPC A-Wing, Lindberg F7U-1 Cutlass)

Methodology

Scribe as much before assembly as possible (when scribing base plastic)

Test on inside surfaces to get the 'feel' of how the plastic scribes (plastic has a "grain" due to the injection flows)

Light touch, repeated light passes instead of fewer harder 'draws'.

Confirm details to be worked and where. Remove any raised lines unless being used as guide (where correct)

Use a pencil to help keep stuff straight. Complicated panel patterns can easily get confusing

Use good light for viewing the work directionally.

Silver plastic shows a raised line even after it is sanded off.

Work out a sequence for the scribing, and a general procedure which differs if scribing into the plastic, primer or paint layers.

Technique

Begin from an endpoint as much as possible. Stop short of the next end point, swap direction - to prevent overruns.

Do lines that begin on an edge or other structural element first, as they are less risky for overruns (IOW, avoid starting with lines that begin 'in the middle' of an area.)

Try and be consistent with everything the same to begin, then selectively deepen specific lines as needed.

Always secure the template with tape and or clamps, depending on the situation.

When using a tape guide, try and not press against the edge too strongly as it can distort

Doubled masking tape, cut with a sharp edge, can be used as a guide. Recommended when scribing in either primer or paint layers.